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Page 1: Forward Guidance to Local Authorities on Changes to HECA Report Submission form

Q1 Name of Local Authority

Stroud District Council

Q2 Name and contact details of the official submitting the report

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Q3 Job title of official submitting the report

Housing Renewal Manager

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Q4 Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties? **Yes**

Q5 If you answered no, are you planning to develop one? **Respondent skipped this question**

Q6 What scheme(s) has your local authority implemented (or is planning to implement) in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties since 2017? (if you have not implemented any scheme, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Communication')

Free text response to question 4a - please outline in no more than 200 words

In partnership with the other 6 authorities in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG), the local authority funds the Warm and Well project (W&W), which is run by Severn Wye Energy Agency.

The service offers a range of support, including a free telephone advice line which offers advice on energy saving and efficiency, ensuring the resident is on the best energy deal and information on available grants, practical interventions such as loft insulation, wall insulation, replacing or repairing heating systems, and referrals to more specialist support.

The Warm & Well service also administers grants for those households who are particularly vulnerable and can provide free home energy visits for those with more complex needs.

As part of the scheme, Warm & Well offers free CPD accredited training to front line staff on fuel poverty awareness.

In addition the Warm & Well Scheme offers advice on renewable technologies including and installer network to assist businesses and householders.

In 2019 we will be developing a scheme to help those living in Park Homes to increase their energy efficiency and carbon savings by providing grant funding for surveys and external wall insulation.

The current Scheme contract ends in March 2020 but will be extended for a further 2 years to March 2022.

The Council is now looking to increase its Carbon Reduction offer to householders with a Target 2030 Carbon Reduction programme which is currently being developed but will include whole house/business surveys and support.

Q7 What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of the scheme(s)? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.

The cost to SDC for the Warm & Well Scheme is £20,000 per annum.

All six Gloucestershire district Councils contribute this amount with South Gloucestershire Council contributing £30,000 and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group £60,000. In addition £200,000 per annum of unspent Gloucestershire Mandatory DFG funding and £15,000 from Public Health South Gloucestershire, is provided to cover installation costs for energy efficiency measures for those on low incomes or with cold related health conditions.

In addition the scheme makes good use of pulling in ECO funding to the area working with utility companies and installers and was successful in bidding for £4.8m from the National Grid Warm Homes Fund.

In 2019 SDC is providing £76,000 of additional DFG funding for the Park Homes insulation project.

Q8 What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme?

SDC is the lead partner in the Warm & Well Scheme. The other partners are; Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Gloucester and Tewkesbury District Councils, South Gloucestershire Council, and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group. The scheme is delivered under contract by Severn Wye Energy Agency a registered charity.

The Scheme has developed formal referral mechanisms with a range of local 3rd sector and charitable organisations such as; Age UK, CAB, SSAFA, British Legion, GP surgeries, County wide Health and Well being teams.

We are also working with installers: Cenergist, Evolve Home Energy Solutions, Broad Oak Properties, GSR Heating.

Q9 What has been the outcome of the scheme(s) (e.g. in terms of economic impact such as job creation, societal impact such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc)?

Since 2017, Warm & Well has accessed over £885,000 of ECO funding, £454,374 of Warm Homes Fund and have provided local grant funding of £337,941, to install 1133 energy efficiency measures (including 185 full central heating systems through the Warm Homes Fund).

The central heating system installs have saved an estimate of £95,835 per annum to the NHS, and £1.7M per annum for wider society (calculations from BRE using pre and post SAP scores)

Through insulation measures alone (947 installs), the scheme has led to a lifetime saving of 17,789t CO2.

The Warm and Well scheme has created 12 jobs within Severn Wye and jobs for multiple installers and companies. We have also trained 674 frontline staff (since Apr 2017) to spot the signs of fuel poverty, so that help can be provided to those in need.

Q10 What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?

Competing priorities and pressure across the sector, can result in fuel poverty and cold homes failing to find traction

There is a reliance on installers and contractors who have access to ECO funding. A big challenge has been ensuring that installers maintain the high level of standards. To address such, Warm & Well hold regular performance reviews with contractors and also re-tenders to ensure contractors whose values align with the service are used.

Despite the well-known benefits of adequate heating and housing on health, generating engagement from front line health professionals has been challenging,

Q11 Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy? **Yes**

Q12 If yes to question 8, please briefly outline how this is undertaken.(or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

W&W provides a telephone advisory service that has advised 4,194 people within the county April 2017 – March 2019. There is a telephone number that is advertised on the local authority website highlighting the access to grants and advice. After calling this number the advisor can assess the eligibility of the client to funding and make general suggestions for conserving energy (smart meters etc.). W&W also provide home visits where advisors can run through a tariff comparison with the client and help them complete the switch. They can also assess the home, make observations and offer suggested measures that others can save the consumer energy.

Q13 How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst local domestic consumers and/or local businesses? (if you do not, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Local Green Supply Chains')

W&W attend numerous events including coffee mornings, memory cafés and a variety of clinics within local authorities. At these events W&W can provide a presentation and advice on how to save energy, the public can also ask about any specific problems they are facing.

They also deliver training days for local organisations and businesses. These training days have taught students studying social care or heating & plumbing services to spot the signs of fuel poverty.

W&W also use posters, billboards and social media to promote events, energy saving and available funding.

Q14 Does your Local Authority promote use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)? (if you answer no please move on to the next section 'Private Rented Sector') **Yes**

Q15 If yes to question 11, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.

W&W attend home visits during which they promote LED lightbulbs, radiator reflectors, and smart meters as part of a project with Smart Energy GB to manage their energy use. At present these are advisory measures but there may be opportunity for installation of these measures by W&W advisors in the future.

W&W created Link to Energy which is a free-to-use online directory helping consumers to find sustainable energy installers and tradespeople. They can also find companies offering energy efficient products and services within the suppliers section. You can access Link to Energy through the LA website.

Q16 What engagement does your local authority have with local businesses/supply chains in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?

Through the County Council, we have representatives on the Business Energy Group at the GFirstLEP. This group ensures that energy and low carbon matters are given prominence in county-wide strategic planning and project development, allowing the LEP to put initiatives in place that help support and grow the clean energy and low carbon economy, and encourage the adoption of measures to improve the efficiency of energy use by businesses.

Q17 If your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018? **Yes**

Q18 Which team within your authority is responsible or will be responsible for leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard, and what are their contact details?

Housing Renewal Team within the Environmental Health Department.
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Housing Renewal Manager
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Q19 What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standard and other related issues?

Information is contained on our website.
Information has been provided to the local National Landlords Association networking meetings.

Q20 Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties? **Yes**

Q21 If yes, how? If no, please explain.

We have obtained EPC data for the district and are in the process of analysing that data with the intention of sending an advisory letter about the standards and offering advice within the next few weeks.

The Warm Homes Fund for first time central heating is available to private rented sector tenants and we have advised several landlords who at first refused permission of the MEES regs which has persuaded them to allow the works to go ahead.

Q22 What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable, please outline the sums and where such funding is sourced. (If you do not have any financial assistance programmes, please enter 'N/A' and move onto the next section 'Fuel Poverty')

Through W&W we assist householders to access grant funding, including ECO, Warm Homes Fund (£5m) and local 'health' funding made available from the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (£200,000) / South Gloucestershire Public Health (£15,000) The Park Homes scheme is being run across Gloucestershire with a view of insulating 100-200 homes. The funding has been made available through the Disabled Facilities Grant budget and totals £450,000 (SDC contribution £76,000).

The Target2020 scheme runs across Gloucestershire, this carries out energy surveys and provides grant funding to small and medium enterprises to install energy efficiency measures

Q23 Does your Local Authority have a fuel poverty strategy? If yes, please describe the scope of the strategy, and the support that is available for low income and vulnerable households to help tackle fuel poverty in your local area. Please also provide a link to your strategy if published.

The Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Strategy expired in December 2018. The review of the strategy was delayed as we were awaiting the development of the Gloucestershire Energy Strategy and ECO3. Work is now being undertaken to review and republish the Affordable Warmth Strategy by September 2019 for the next 5 years.

Q24 What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties as being in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

W&W have identified areas that are in the lowest 25% in 'index of multiple deprivation' and targeted them for promotion via their Energy Champion scheme.

Alongside this, W&W target areas with low EPC ratings using mapping data. The park homes project targets this group as they have low EPC rating and are often electrically heated. There is also a focus on rural homes which are off the gas network - as the properties are usually relying on electric heating which is more expensive or using solid fuel these individuals tend to have high running costs for their homes.

Through W&W, training has been provided to colleges and those working in residents' homes to be able to identify signs of fuel poverty and how to refer in to the scheme.

Q25 How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy? (enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

Gloucestershire Energy Strategy identifies and targets households in fuel poverty by their low EPC ratings and income. 'Tackling fuel poverty at its roots' is one of the key building blocks and core aims of the strategy. This adds to an over-arching commitment; 'Ensuring all public sector policies and funding programmes are aligned with Gloucestershire's sustainable energy ambitions'.

SDC have recently made the decision to become Carbon Neutral by 2030 and are in the early stages of scoping this work which will include the development of a Carbon Reduction Strategy.

Q26 What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty and if so what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken? (enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

Despite the W&W advice line being open to all householders, the scheme focuses delivery on low income, vulnerable households who are likely to be living in fuel poverty. In order to qualify for grant funding for energy efficiency measures, householders must be in receipt of benefits, be on a low income and/or living with a vulnerability.

Home visits are available to people who need extra support, where advisors help individuals to reduce their fuel costs such as assisting with tariff switching, providing advice on energy saving products and suggesting measures that will reduce fuel costs. Advisors ensure that individuals are aware of national initiatives such as the Warm Homes Discount, and can support them to contact their fuel provider. The advisors also refer householders to other organisations and trust funds to support or write off fuel debt.

Partnerships have been developed with Npower (Health through Warmth), the Coop and EON.

Q27 Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility? If yes, please include a link to your Sol below. (enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/energy-efficiency>

Q28 Please use the following space to provide any further information you feel might be of benefit to BEIS, in helping us to understand Flex delivery in more detail. For example, the number of declarations signed versus the number of households helped.

The introduction of flexible eligibility has enabled us to help many more vulnerable people who are living in cold homes. Nearly half of the households who have qualified for ECO funding since 2017 through the warm & well scheme, have qualified through flexible eligibility.

We have signed 1076 declarations and so far 518 homes have received one or more measures through the scheme.

Q29 Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to: Engage and support your residents (including those in vulnerable circumstance or with pre-payment metering) to promote take up of smart meters and achieve associated benefits (e.g. ability to control energy use, identify best value tariffs)? Please detail any work undertaken or planned with local/community groups, housing associations, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers.

W&W have partnered with Smart Energy GB to raise awareness and promote smart meters to householders over 65, helping them to manage their energy use and bills. SWEA staff have been inducted/trained on smart meters. Staff will complete surveys on behalf of Smart Energy GB and provide information and advice during telephone enquiries and home visits. W&W will review and pre-qualification of historical data records for over-65s and telephone contact historical contacts for survey completion. The team will provide smart meter information and advice to 65+ householders being discharged from Gloucester Royal Infirmary and Cheltenham General Hospital as part of Warm & Well, including survey completion at home visits across Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire. They will incorporate smart meter advice provision into this service, focusing on the over-65s.

Q30 Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to: Integrate your approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation with the opportunities presented by the installation of smart meters, drawing upon materials from the Smart Meter Energy Efficiency Materials Project or other sources of independent information.

W&W are investigating the viability of projects that will be looking to maximise benefits to householders using a combination of smart meters and whole house energy efficiency measures - these include both financial and health benefits. By taking advantage of innovation in smart technology as well as changes in energy provider/ client interactions, we are hopeful that clients across Gloucestershire / South Gloucestershire will become more engaged in their energy usage and as a result see a reduction in fuel costs whilst improving health outcomes leading to more people living healthier lives for longer in their own homes.

Q31 Please detail any: Resources/ support (e.g. services, funding) available to residents who have had an appliance(s) condemned for safety reasons and can't afford to replace it (e.g. during visual safety checks conducted during their smart meter installation or otherwise).

W&W refer to installers for ECO funding for replacement heating systems. There is also funding available locally for householders who need minor works and/or top up funding and have an existing health condition.

W&W work in partnership with other local and national organisations who have access to grant funding (npower – health through warmth scheme, ECHO), and are also able to signpost towards trust fund grants provided by the energy suppliers.

Q32 Please detail any: Existing relationships with energy suppliers to help ensure that the opportunities presented by vacant properties under your control are effectively utilised (i.e. gaining access to install a smart meter).

No

Q33 Please outline any future schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has been doing or is planning to undertake to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation or businesses in your area, for example, within your LEP Energy Strategy. (if you do not plan any future schemes currently, please enter 'N/A')

All the schemes mentioned above will continue with the extension of the Warm & Well contract with Severn Wye Energy Agency. Stroud District Council is currently at the very early stages of developing its Carbon Reduction Strategy which will be developed over the next 12 months and currently has been allocated £200,000 funding. One of the actions likely to be implemented is the provision of whole house/business Carbon reduction/energy efficiency surveys and reports with follow up support and guidance to encourage take up of identified measures.

SDC is currently considering submitting a partnership bid in June 2019 when a call for PA4 ERDF funding through the Gloucestershire LEP opens.
